

The Council re-assembled at the Council Chamber, Fort St. George, at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 19th December 1922, the hon. Diwan Bahadur Sir P. RAJAGOPALA ACHARIYAR Avargal, K.C.S.I., C.I.E., President, presiding.

## I

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

[Order made by the President of the Madras Legislative Council under Standing Order No. 15—

(1) Printed copies of the questions and answers to be put and given at a meeting of the Council shall be placed on the Council table an hour before the President takes his seat.

(2) The questions shall be put and answered in the following manner :—

The Secretary shall call the name of each interpellator in alphabetical order, specify the serial numbers of his questions, and make a sufficient pause to allow him or any other member a reasonable opportunity of rising in his place if he is desirous of asking a supplementary question. Supplementary questions must be put immediately after the principal questions to which they relate.]

*The new process of salt manufacture.*

599 Q.—Diwan Bahadur C. ARUNACHALA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is the case that a new process has been discovered by Mr. Schomburg of the Shomtir Salt Company by the use of which a quantity of salt equal to that now made at all the factories of the Presidency can be produced in an area of 50 acres at two-thirds the cost of ordinary country salt;

(b) whether the Government propose to purchase the Company's process or to enter into partnership with the Company; and

(c) whether the Government propose to give any concessions to this Company which are not given to salt manufacturers in general?

A.—(a) The question apparently refers to the article published in the *South of India Observer* of the 8th April 1922 wherein the writer referred to a discovery of an artesian spring of dense brine by the use of which a small area was to be made to yield an enormous quantity of salt. The Government have no information that any such discovery has been made. The report of the deputation which waited upon His Excellency the Governor, published in the *Madras Mail* of the 11th May 1922, was issued without reference to Government. The writer of this report has apparently confused this reported discovery with the alleged possession by the Company of a secret process for purifying salt. So far as Government are aware it is not claimed for this secret process that it in any way increases production.

(b) The Government have no such intention.

(c) The Government have given the Company a lease of 1,624 acres of land in the Tiruporur swamp to be used as a reservoir and waived the recovery of excess establishment charges amounting to Rs. 1,385-2-0. They do not propose to treat the Company in any way differently from the other licensees.